Copyright © Magnetic Scrolls

THE PAWN

GAMEPLAY

Introduction

The Pawn is an adventure game set in the magical world of Kerovnia during a period of tremendous social upheaval.

Recently, King Erik, the present ruler of the land, has started to lose his hold on the Kerovnian peoples and can no longer rely on their loyalty and supreme devotion to support him through times of war, famine and personal bankruptcy.

Many political commentators have attributed this decline in popularity to Erik's steadfast refusal to reinstate the citizenship of the Roobikyoub dwarfs who were banished en masse soon after the assassination of the beloved Queen Jendah II and have never since returned.

The dwarfs were thought to be the sole instigators of the assassination plot but the real facts were kept well behind closed (and locked) doors.

Needless to say the dwarfs were of immense economic importance to Kerovnia with their relentless efforts to produce the smoothest, strongest malt whisky this side of the Obakanga valley and they are sorely missed in these days of economic gloom (not least for the quality of their whisky).

In the absence of the dwarfs, the drinks market has been dominated by the Farthington Real Ale Company (which has had some rather dodgy dealings with Boris Grunchkev O.K.B.) and by the Romni gnomes who produce a refreshing spring water. Neither of these two influential groups wish to see the dwarfs come back on the scene to take a large slice of the market but the people of Kerovnia, many of whom are beginning to suspect that the dwarfs were completely innocent of the assassination, vehemently disagree.

Standing in the middle of all this is King Erik who becomes more and more unpopular the longer he leaves his decision, and, to top it all, there is a general election on the horizon.

At this point, you arrive on the scene. You will be the principle player in the game and the story unfolds according to your decisions and actions.

The program will describe where you are, who (or what) is there with you and what they are doing. It is then up to you to choose what you wish to do and tell the program in plain English (well almost!).

You'll have to discover the goal of the game and the best way to achieve it by utilizing the items you find on your travels, conversing with characters and exercising your imagination.

Movement

To wander around the Kerovnian countryside and neighbouring areas you must tell the program in which direction you wish to travel or where you want to go. It understands the eight points of the compass: NORTH, NORTHEAST, EAST, SOUTHEAST, SOUTH, SOUTHWEST, WEST and NORTHWEST, as well as UP and DOWN. (Also known as N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W, NW, U and D to subsonic typists.) So, to move from one place to another immediately to the north (assuming there's nothing to stop you) you can type:—

NORTH
N
GO NORTH
EXIT NORTH
QUIETLY WALK NORTH

and one or two other variations on the theme. However, if you happen to know that to the north there is, for example, a furniture shop, then you could also type:—

ENTER THE FURNITURE SHOP
GO INTO THE FURNITURE SHOP

WALK INTO THE FURNITURE SHOP
ENTER SHOP

The last example assumes that there is only one shop nearby. If there were several then the program would prompt you for an adjective (more of this anon).

Once inside the shop you might want to sit down, resting your weary legs. Thus having spotted a particularly comfortable looking leather couch:—

SIT DOWN
SIT ON THE COMFORTABLE LEATHER COUCH
SIT ON THE COUCH
GET ON THE COUCH
GO COUCH

and to get off the couch again:—

GET UP
STAND UP
GET OFF THE COUCH
GET UP OFF THE COUCH
GO SOUTH (also leaves the shop)

Talking of leaving the shop, there are a few ways to do this:—

LEAVE SHOP
GO SOUTH
S
GO S
OUT
O
EXIT
EXIT SHOP
EXIT SOUTH

It's quite possible for one location to have several exits, in these instances one will be chosen if OUT, O or EXIT are used without specifying a direction.

Locations are often connected by doors, so to get from one to the other you can use:—

GO DOOR

ENTER DOOR

this is, of course, if the door is already open.

Actions

The Pawn allows you to use many verbs to give it commands. At the simplest a command consists of a verb (e.g. GET) and a noun (e.g. paper), thus:—

GET PAPER

performs a single action (it picks up the paper). However, if you want to pick up several items (for instance the paper, pen and ink bottle) it does become rather tiresome to repeatedly type GET, so you can give it a list:—

GET PAPER, PEN AND INK BOTTLE

PICK UP PAPER, PEN, BOTTLE

If it happened that these were all in a school bag, together with an eraser then:—

GET ALL FROM THE SCHOOL BAG EXCEPT THE ERASER

GET THE CONTENTS OF THE BAG BUT NOT THE ERASER

You can use lots of verbs in this way so:—

EAT ALL ON THE PLATE EXCEPT THE BACON RASHER

is no problem.

Obviously the meaning of ALL must change, depending on the verb that it's being used with. So, in GET ALL it means the objects which are in the room, just lying about but in DROP ALL it means the items you are carrying.

As you can see, individual actions can become quite complicated, so once they are strung together very powerful commands can be made.

GET ALL EXCEPT THE CASES BUT NOT THE VIOLIN CASE THEN KILL THE MAN EATING SHREW WITH THE CONTENTS OF THE VIOLIN CASE. REMOVE THE SHREW'S TAIL AND USE IT TO TIE THE POLE AND THE NOOSE TOGETHER.

This command can be broken down into four actions, let's look at these one at a time:—

I) GET ALL EXCEPT THE CASES BUT NOT THE VIOLIN CASE

This will get all the objects in the room, less the cases but *will* get the violin case. CASES is an example of a group of objects which can be referred to with a single word e.g. AN OLD RUSTY KEY, A SHINY NEW KEY AND A LARGE PADLOCK KEY could be referred to with the single word KEYS, such as in the command:—

GET THE KEYS

which is equivalent to the longer:—

GET THE OLD RUSTY KEY, THE SHINY NEW KEY AND THE LARGE PADLOCK KEY

or

GET THE KEYS EXCEPT THE SHINY ONE

which is equivalent to:—

GET THE OLD RUSTY KEY AND THE PADLOCK KEY

II) KILL THE MAN EATING SHREW WITH THE CONTENTS OF THE VIOLIN CASE

Here we're trying to use whatever is in the violin case to kill the shrew. Let's hope there's something mean in that violin case!

III) REMOVE THE SHREW'S TAIL

This is an example of a possessive construction. Saying SHREW'S lets The Pawn know that we mean that particular tail, well, it would

be mighty unwise to try to remove the tail belonging to the fire breathing dragon that happens to be asleep next to the shrew!

IV) USE IT TO TIE THE POLE AND THE NOOSE TOGETHER

Worthy of note in this command is the use of the pronoun IT, which refers back to the last direct object you used, in this case the shrew's tail. This command is also phrased in the form USE ITEM TO DO VERB TO ANOTHER ITEM. I guess a man eating shrew's tail has to have it's uses . . .

These four distinct parts can all be issued in the same command by using AND, THEN, "." and ","

More About Talking To The Program

When you have played The Pawn for some time you will find that lots of common, long or just plain awkward to type words have short versions to allow quicker input of commands. Here is a list of just a few:—

DROP	DR	GET	G
INVENTORY	IN	NORTH	N
SOUTH	S	EAST	E
WEST	W	NORTHEAST	NE
NORTHWEST	NW	SOUTHEAST	SE
SOUTHWEST	SW	UP	U
DOWN	D	OUT	O
LOOK	L	PRONOUNS	PN
WITH	WI	FROM	F

In addition to the abbreviation of some words, you will soon notice that The Pawn will not object if you allow your English to become a little sloppier. For example, the following commands are all completely fine by the program:—

GET THE NOOSE THEN TIE IT TO THE POLE
G NOOSE, TIE IT TO POLE

or

GET EVERYTHING THEN PUT HAT ON
G ALL, WEAR HAT

Occasionally it will object if you are not specific enough when telling it which object you really mean. For example, if you are carrying two hats, a spotted blue one and a small yellow one, and you say

DROP HAT

the program cannot decide which hat you want to drop, and so responds:—

Which hat, the small hat or the spotted hat?

you can now reply in several ways, let's assume it's the small yellow hat you want to drop, some possible replies are:—

YELLOW
SMALL
YELLOW ONE
SMALL ONE
THE YELLOW ONE
THE YELLOW HAT
THE YELLOW SMALL HAT
SMALL YELLOW ONE

as well as retyping the command again, having inserted the missing adjective thus:—

DROP YELLOW HAT
DROP SMALL YELLOW HAT

Should you give a combination of adjectives unknown to the program, assuming there is no spotted yellow hat, then

DROP SPOTTED YELLOW HAT

will produce:—

What spotted yellow hat?

The position of an object can also be used to specify which particular

object you wish to use. For example, if you were carrying two keys, one in a bag and one in your pocket, then:—

LOOK AT THE KEY THAT IS IN MY POCKET

will tell you about the one in your pocket rather than the one in the bag. Similarly:—

LOOK AT THE KEY IN THE BAG

gives the description of the other key. If you type:—

PUT THE KEY IN THE BAG IN MY POCKET

then The Pawn will move the key currently in the bag into your pocket.

Conversation

You are not alone in the wilderness!

Occasionally, you will meet characters on your travels and you (being the polite sort) may wish to converse with them.

Maybe you merely want to pass the time of day but, on the other hand, there may be some cunning ulterior motives for your inquiries.

There are five basic structures which the program allows you to use in order to talk to characters:

I) ASK someone ABOUT something
e.g. ASK THE ALIEN ABOUT THE SPACESHIP

II) ASK someone "something"
e.g. ASK THE ALIEN "WHO AM I?"

III) SAY TO someone "something"
e.g. SAY TO ALIEN "HELLO"

IV) SAY "something"
e.g. SAY "HOW CAN I WIN THIS GAME?"

V) someone, something
e.g. ALIEN, PHONE HOME

Special Commands

These are mostly one word commands which can be used at any time during the game as you see fit. They cannot (apart from INVENTORY) be used as part of multiple action commands, as anything following them is ignored.

INVENTORY

This gives you a list of the objects that you are carrying or wearing. It may be abbreviated to simply I.

AGAIN

Instead of completely retyping a command you can type AGAIN which repeats your previous command.

EXITS

This lists the ways out from your current location.

SCORE

This displays your current score along with the maximum possible score, your current score is also displayed as part of the status line at the top of the screen.

BRIEF

In 'brief mode' you will only get the description of a room if you actually type LOOK to request it, rather than automatically when you enter the room.

VERBOSE

In 'verbose mode' room descriptions are given every time you enter a room, even if you have been there previously.

NORMAL

The default mode, 'normal mode', gives room descriptions when you enter a room for the first time and, thereafter, it only updates the status line and tells you the new room's name.

QUIT

All good things come to an end, as they say, so if you want to stop playing this is how you do it.

RESTART

This lets you replay the game from the beginning without having to reset your machine and reload the game.

Advice From The Experts

If you have never played an adventure game before the following advice will be helpful. Some of it may seem a bit obvious at first but, taken as a whole, it provides a good basis for success in the game.

I) Make a map, briefly detailing each location, its exits and the objects you find there.

II) Examine everything closely as most of the objects you find will be useful at some point in the game.

III) Read the location descriptions very carefully — otherwise you may miss something important.

IV) Save the game frequently. That way you can try something risky and return to the saved position if something goes badly wrong or you inadvertently get 'killed'.

V) If the program doesn't understand one of your commands try rephrasing it, using different words to convey what you wish to achieve — be sure that what you type would allow anyone reading it to understand your meaning, so that they could perform the actions you're asking the computer to understand.

More
When there are too many lines to display on the screen at once, the message 'MORE' will appear at the bottom left of the screen. Pressing any key at this point will continue the scrolling.

Save
This command allows you to save partially completed games, which you may return to at a later time (Also strongly advised before doing something dangerous!).

The Pawn will ask you for a game number to identify the game, and will permit a maximum of eight games to be stored at any one time on a given disk. Using a game number which already exists on the disk will cause the existing file to be overwritten.

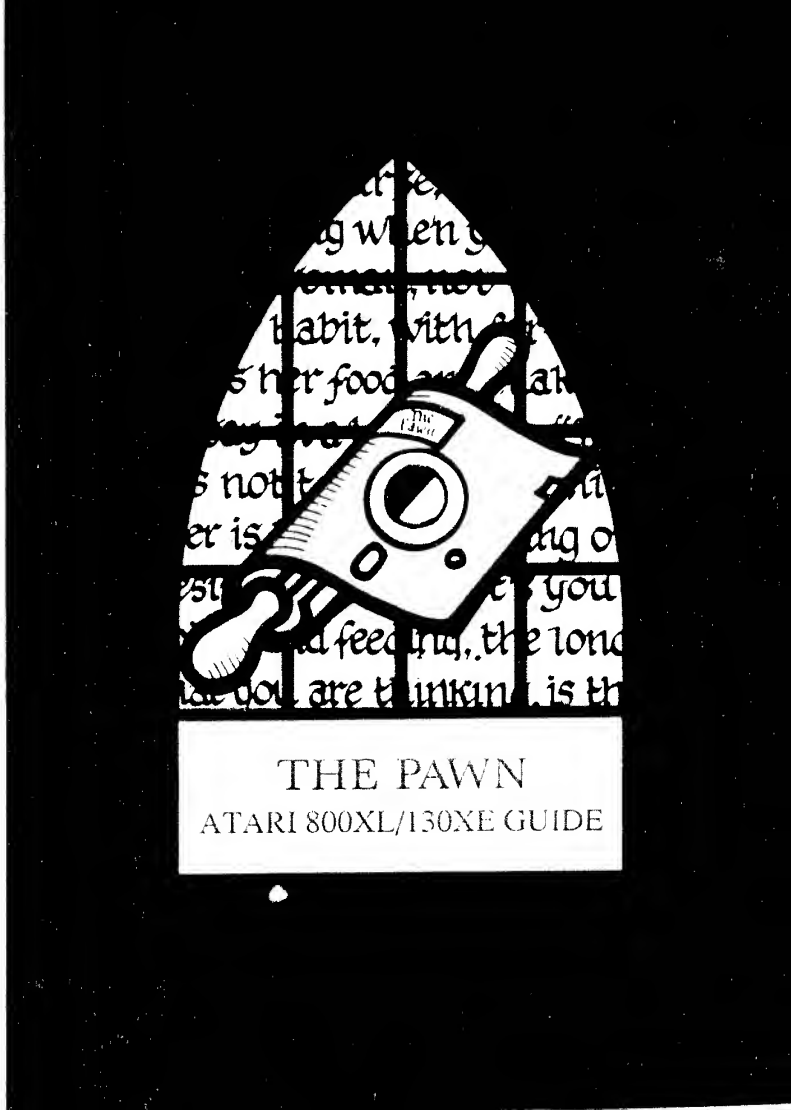
Please note that files are not written out in DOS format, so be sure to use a formatted disk which does not contain any files which you may want to keep.

The Pawn will prompt you to change disks as necessary during the SAVE operation. Press any key once you have responded to each prompt. Should an error occur, The Pawn will notify you and allow three further attempts before abandoning the SAVE and returning to the game.

Restore
This command allows you to restore a previously saved game (you did save before you tried to ride the dragon, didn't you?).
As with SAVE, it will allow three further attempts if an error occurs.

Changing disks
Occasionally, The Pawn will require you to change disks. You will be prompted to insert the appropriate one. Pressing any key after you have done so will allow the program to continue.

Copyright © Magnetic Scrolls



ATARI 800XL/130XE GUIDE

What you need
To play The Pawn you will need the following:

1 Atari 800XL or 130XE computer
1 Atari 1050 disk drive

Making a backup copy of The Pawn
Before you begin playing The Pawn, it is advised that you make a backup copy of the two master disks, by following the procedure below:-

1. Format two blank disks in 'double density' (using, for example, DOS 2.5 or 3.0)
2. Invoke the backup facility by switching on the computer with the 'Pawn master disk 1' in Drive 1, and the **SELECT** key held down.
3. The backup facility will then proceed automatically, prompting you to change disks as necessary. Follow the prompts carefully and once you have responded to each one, press any key to continue.
4. When both disks have been successfully duplicated, remove the disk from the drive and switch off the computer.
5. Write protect your two backup disks and label them '1' and '2'. Always use them in preference to the originals which should be carefully preserved.

Loading The Pawn
Insert your copy of 'Pawn disk 1' in Drive 1 and switch the computer on. The Pawn will load automatically.

Text screen layout
The text display area is divided into two sections.

The top line displays your current status. Reading from left to right the information is:

The name of the location that you are currently in.
Your score to date.
The number of moves completed since the start of the game.

The rest of the display is devoted to the game itself.

Communicating with The Pawn
When waiting for your input, The Pawn will display a prompt character '>' and a steady solid block cursor. At this point, simply type in a sentence describing what you wish to do, end by pressing the **RETURN** key.

Editing your input
The following keys allow you to edit your current input line:

Cursor left	Move the cursor left
Cursor right	Move the cursor right
Cursor up	Move the cursor one word to the left
Cursor down	Move the cursor one word to the right
Insert key	Enter 'insert' mode
Delete key	Delete character left of cursor

When in 'insert' mode the program will display a blinking cursor. To exit 'insert' mode without entering the line press the **RETURN** key or any of the cursor movement keys.

Re-editing your last line
If you discover that you have made a typing error on your previous line after you have entered it, pressing the **ESCAPE** key will bring it back for editing.

Graphics
The graphics will be displayed automatically when you first enter a room with an illustration. You may vary the size of the displayed picture using the two function keys **SELECT** and **START** which scroll it up and down respectively.

When displaying a new picture, The Pawn will scroll it down to the same position occupied by the previous one.

Commands relating to graphics are as follows:

GRAPHICS ON	Switches the graphics on
GRAPHICS OFF	Switches the graphics off

Please note that The Pawn normally begins in the 'GRAPHICS ON' mode, however, you may override this by loading the game with the **OPTION** function key held down, forcing The Pawn to start in 'GRAPHICS OFF' mode. This will improve response times, particularly on the Atari 800XL. The key may be released once the loading message is displayed.